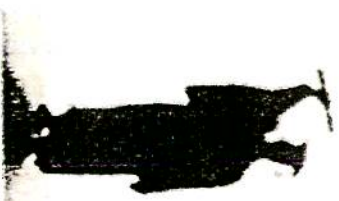


Applying for a U.S. Student Visa (F-1, M-1) in The Bahamas



A Step-By-Step Guide

Embassy of the United
States of America

Nassau

The Bahamas



<http://nassau.usembassy.gov>

Congratulations! You've just been accepted to a college or university in the U.S. This "how to apply" guide is designed to help guide you through the U.S. student visa application process. **We encourage you to apply early!** Visa appointments fill up quickly. You risk not being able to make it to class on-time if you delay in applying.

Step 1: Complete an electronic visa application form (called the DS-160). A link to the electronic form is located on the website at <https://ceac.state.gov/geniv>. You are responsible for the accuracy of the information in your application. If someone prepares the application for you, please be sure that the information he or she has put into the electronic application is correct.

Step 2: Schedule your visa interview. Visit <http://ais.usvisa-info.com/en-bs> to create an account that will allow you to pay your visa application fee (\$160). Payments can be made at various Cash N'Go locations or online by credit card. For Cash N'Go payment, wait 2 business days before scheduling your visa interview online. For credit card payments, you will receive direct access to the appointment calendar.

Step 3: Pay your SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) fee: The SEVIS fee is \$200 and is payable online at www.fmjfee.com/i901fee or by money order. Be sure to print your receipt.

Step 4: Gather your financial documents! Students are required to demonstrate that they have *immediate* access to the entire amount of required funds listed on the I-20 form (tuition, room and board and other expenses) for the first year of education, and demonstrate access to funding to cover expenses for all subsequent years of education in the United States.

IMPORTANT: Bank letters that do not specify a balance, certificates of deposit, stock certificates, pension funds or land holdings do not qualify as immediate access to funding.



Step 5: Assemble the documentation that you believe will support your application for a U.S. visa, including your passport or certificate of identity. A checklist of documents is located on our website. Keep in mind that the consular officer who reviews your case may or may not review your documents. In order to apply for a visa you **MUST** have:

- **A valid passport:** It should be in good condition, have available (e.g.: empty) pages for visas, and must be valid for at least six months beyond your anticipated travel dates.
- **SEVIS and Visa Application Fees:** All fees must be paid before you arrive at the embassy for your visa interview. Make sure to bring a receipt of your payment.

- **Your I-20 form and DS-160 confirmation sheet:** To fill out the DS-160 application, please access <https://ceac.state.gov/geniv>. This form may only be completed online.

- **Financial documents:** Provide proof of available funds to pay your first year of tuition.
- **Two recent (within last 6 months) visa-sized photos** on a white background.

Step 6: Arrive on-time at the Embassy for your scheduled interview. Be sure to bring all of your documents (including your SEVIS receipt and your I-20) and a photo ID. After clearing security, an Embassy employee will review your application packet for accuracy.

Step 7: Have your fingerprints taken. Once you arrive at the embassy, your ten fingerprints will be taken via a digital scanner in order to begin processing your visa application.

Step 8: Complete your interview. A consular officer will ask you a series of questions to determine your eligibility for a visa. In order to qualify for a student visa, you must prove to the consular officer that a) you intend to study in the United States, and not pursue any other activities (like working), b) that you will abide by the terms of the visa (i.e. respect U.S. laws) and c) you have sufficient social, economic and/or family ties to compel you to return to The Bahamas after you have completed your studies.

IMPORTANT! By no means is an applicant guaranteed a visa at the end of this process. It is **YOUR responsibility to demonstrate YOUR eligibility for a visa under U.S. immigration law.**

Step 9: Success! If your interview is successful, your visa is usually ready for pick up in 3-5 business days. If you live in Nassau or Freeport, you may pick up your visa from a DHL office located in the city. For applicants from the Family Islands, please arrange the pick-up of your visa with the Consular Section at the end of your interview. Best of luck with your studies in the United States of America!



REMEMBER: Although the Form I-20 must be presented at the visa interview, you do not need to wait for the I-20 before scheduling an appointment. (The Form I-20 is a required document from your college or university that confirms your status as a student to the Department of Homeland Security and allows you to receive a student visa.)

Avoid the long lines!
Visa appointments fill up quickly,
so apply today!!!!

For general information on U.S. student visas, please access <http://travel.state.gov>.



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